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American Rose



Glowing Amber

MINIATURE GEMS — FROM — GEORGE MANDER

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In Fall 1992, amateur hybridizer George Mander of Coquitlam, British Columbia, created a stir in the Pacific Northwest with the introduction of a remarkable new miniature rose named **Rubies 'n' Pearls**. George had registered the rose in April 1992 and entered it himself in

four fall rose shows where it won three trophies. The following year, it won four trophies in the spring rose shows and George was able to sell hundreds of plants to those who saw or heard about this miniature gem.

Lacking a United States distribu-

tor, **Rubies 'n' Pearls** is not widely known outside of the Pacific Northwest. And as time went on, it became apparent that although a striking color, the very vigorous and disease-resistant plant was a very tall grower and produced much larger blooms than most miniatures.

Canadian White Star



Rubies 'n' Pearls



all photos courtesy George Mander

Its form, although occasionally good, proved undependable. However encouraged by this success, George continued his breeding efforts with miniature roses and has now produced two new miniature gems — **Golden Beryl** and **Glowing Amber** — which have the promise of being two of the most outstanding miniature roses, both for garden and exhibition.

Although George Mander is enjoying increased success of late, he is not by any measure a newcomer to rose hybridizing having been at it since 1969. Curiously, he became interested in hybridization before he had learned much of rose culture. His hybridizing efforts were slowed, however, by the fact he held a full-time job in another field and worked much overtime. Also, hybridizing roses in British Columbia without benefit of a greenhouse made his work difficult.

The frequent rain showers in June and July were his biggest problem, and up until 1988 he covered all of his crosses with a small paper bag. When rain threatened he would add a plastic bag over each paper bag. George's wife, who would often count the many bags on his roses, recalls one summer when 72 filled the garden making George the object of neighbor's good-natured teasing as they congratulated him on that year's exceptional paper bag crop.

In very wet summers, only 30 to 40 percent of George's crosses would take, and during those working years he never averaged more than 100 - 200 crosses annually. Nonetheless, George worked at making new roses year after year. From 1969 to 1989 his efforts went in many directions working with shrubs, climbers, hybrid teas and floribundas as well as the west coast native *Rosa nutkana*. He seldom had more

than a few dozen seeds from certain crosses and sometimes no germination.

But George did have some modest successes, the most well known of which have been **Canadian White Star®**, a white hybrid tea introduced in 1980 and **Shades of Pink™**, a pink blend floribunda introduced in 1985. But his current success traces to a relatively unknown rose that he produced in 1974 which bears the code name **MANpurple**. This hybrid tea is a cross of **Mount Shasta** X **Super Sun**. **Super Sun** is a sport of **Piccadilly®**, a hybrid tea introduced

things to come.

Seeking to introduce the color realized in **MANpurple** into his roses, George used its parents repeatedly for several years. Realizing no success he started to use **MANpurple** itself. But as a seed parent, he found that less than 10 percent of his crosses set seed, and of the few seeds produced over many years, not a single one ever germinated. **MANpurple** was not much better as a pollen parent as very few seeds were produced from each cross, and those few which finally germinated produced only red and

pink seedlings. Succeeding crosses produced hundreds of seedlings with only red, pink and white colors and not a single one of mauve or purple, nor any bicolor. George could only wonder if the purple bicolor of **MANpurple** would ever repeat in his roses.

In 1989, George grew his first miniature rose, a tree rose of **Rise 'n' Shine** which he budded himself in 1988. He knew that **Rise 'n' Shine** has been used extensively by many breeders. Ralph Moore, the breeder of **Rise 'n' Shine** told him that it produced too many white seedlings for further use in hybridizing. But since George had 105 blooms on the tree rose, he decided that he might as well pollinate as many as possible with **MANpurple**. "Maybe, just maybe," he thought to himself, "the purple/cream bicolor will finally come through."

His efforts produced about 75 seed hips with more than 600 seeds, and when germinated he found that Ralph Moore was right. Half of the blooms were just white. Others revealed colors of yellow, pink, red and scarlet with some bicolor. But finally, at long last, a few came up with the purple/cream bicolor blooms that George had



MANpurple

by Sam McGredy IV in 1960 which features brightly colored blooms of a scarlet base and a gold reverse. **MANpurple** is a nice purple/cream bicolor that opens very fast and also fades rapidly. Although not an exceptional rose in its own right, **MANpurple** laid the groundwork for

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Shades of Pink (above) and left in a bowl of 580 blooms.

been seeking. In all he had a total of only five seedlings with a bicolor of ruby/purple with cream/yellow reverse. Two were floribundas and three were miniatures. And only one of the minis turned out to be non-fading. It was also very disease resistant and was the most vigorous seedling he had ever produced. Thinking it a gem he registered this rose in April 1992 with the name **Rubies 'n' Pearls**.

Encouraged by the success of **Rubies 'n' Pearls**, George turned his attention to breeding miniature roses. Finding he could keep his

potted miniature seed parents under his fiberglass back porch during pollination allowed him to give up the paper and plastic bags, and this in turn increased his percentage of takes to 70 - 80 percent.

In May 1992, George took early retirement at age 61. He was then able to make a record number of crosses using **Rubies 'n' Pearls**. It also allowed him more time to think, and in the summer of 1993 he came up with the very good thought of using the golden yellow miniature rose **June Laver™** as a parent.

June Laver™ is a well known exhibition rose introduced by the Canadian hybridizer Keith Laver in 1987. It is a cross of the yellow hybrid tea **Helmut Schmidt®** and **Gold Mine™**, a deep yellow miniature rose introduced by Keith Laver which also has **Rise 'n' Shine** as the seed parent. It has exquisite form and

rich deep color but is known for producing short stems on a small compact bush. Could the remarkable purple color of **Rubies 'n' Pearls** enrich or be enriched by the color of **June Laver™**? Could **June Laver™** improve the form of **Rubies 'n' Pearls**? And could **Rubies 'n' Pearls** add some stem size? Bingo. The idea worked. The first success was a rose that George Mander introduced in 1995 as **Golden Beryl** (MANberyl). **Golden Beryl** is a yellow blend cross whose color depends on the weather. In cool weather it is a clear yellow but in warmer weather the yellow is brushed with tinges of orange to orange/red. It has good form and



A mini bowl of 48 blooms of Rubies 'n' Pearls



vigor, more so than **June Laver™**, but is still on the smaller size. Nevertheless it is a promising new miniature gem that will certainly be seen often on the show table.

But the best was next. In spring 1996 George introduced what he considers the "best yet" of his thousands of seedlings. Continuing his use of gems as names for miniature roses he called it **Glowing Amber**.

I first met **Glowing Amber** and George Mander at the Seattle National Convention in June 1996. Earlier in the year I had acquired **Golden Beryl** from Oregon Miniature Roses and was able to enter a specimen in my English Box at the convention. I was cruising the show tables looking for interesting new roses and there was a specimen of

Glowing Amber that had been entered by George Mander himself. There were also several excellent specimens of **Golden Beryl**. So I sought him out which was not difficult since I found him wearing a specimen of **Glowing Amber** on his shirt. We became friends, and he has shipped me three bushes of **Glowing Amber** which I have been growing since that time.

In my garden **Glowing Amber** has already demonstrated excellent

form and vigor. In fact the first bloom on the best bush he sent me would have contended for Queen of Show had there been a show available. The blooms are velvet red with a deep yellow reverse. They have a tendency to quill, but there are lots of petals which permit stripping to achieve a more rounded appearance. The center is a perfect pinpoint, and the bloom is long lasting when cut. And surprisingly, for a rose from Canada, it did remarkably

well in the 100 degree heat of summer. Its ability to do well in heat was confirmed by a report I received for *Horizon Roses* from Ken Jones in Arizona. The report was received too late for inclusion in *Horizons* but I repeat it here: "Upright growth that makes for long stems with nearly every bloom. The foliage has good color and is proportionate to the size of the blooms. The blooms are everything an exhibitor looks for — bright colors, high centers, and they hold their form for several days. I expect this to be one of the top two or three minis on the market very soon."

Since the June '96 convention George has created another stir in the Pacific Northwest rose shows. In five shows **Glowing Amber** has won Queen of Show twice and trophies for the best new introduction, miniature bloom cycle, best group of three, best group of five and the miniature bowl. George has also won a trophy for a miniature box with three each of **Glowing Amber** and **Golden Beryl**. I predict that the success of these roses will soon spread to shows throughout the United States.

Golden Beryl and **Glowing Amber** are indeed two miniature gems. George Mander is an old prospector whose years of efforts have been rewarded with discovery. And now that he is exclusively directing his hybridizing efforts to miniature roses, we can expect the discovery of more miniature gems. 

Golden Beryl and **Glowing Amber** are available in the U.S. from:

Oregon Miniature Roses, Inc.
8285 S.W. 185th Avenue
Beaverton, OR 97007-6712
Phone: (503) 649-4482

The Mini Rose Garden
P.O. Box 203
Cross Hill, SC 29332
Phone: (800) 996-4647

Both roses are available in quantities of 10 or greater from:

George Mander
Select Roses
2232 Gale Avenue
Coquitlam, B.C.
Canada V3K 2Y8
Phone: (604) 936-6661
(after 12 noon Pacific Time)



Golden Beryl (above) and **Glowing Amber** (below).

